AMENDEMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Pending Claims

1. (Allowed) An implantable balloon comprising:

a valve portion having:

a valve body defining an inlet;

a valve stem extending from said body opposite said inlet;

a piercing extending from said inlet, through said body and stem, said valve portion constructed from a soft, elastomeric material having memory thereby causing said piercing to remain closed and fluid-tight unless penetrated by a relatively rigid member;

a balloon portion, integral with said valve portion, constructed and arranged to receive and hold fluids exiting said piercing opposite said inlet

2. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 1 wherein said valve stem comprises at least one side.

3. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 1 wherein said valve stem comprises a rounded tip.

4. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 1 wherein said valve stem comprises a side and said valve

portion further has a sidewall, laterally displaced from said valve stem side, and integral

with an inside surface of said balloon portion.

5. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 1 wherein said valve portion is substantially cylindrical.

6. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 1 wherein said valve body, said valve stem, and said inlet
are substantially cylindrical and substantially concentric.

7. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 1 wherein said valve stem comprises at least one side and
said piercing extends through said side of said stem.

8. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 1 wherein said valve stem comprises a side and said valve
portion further has a sidewall extending from said valve body, laterally displaced from said valve stem side.

9. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 8 wherein said valve body forms a curved web, integrally
connecting said valve portion sidewall with said valve stem side, said curved web being
concave and opening toward said balloon portion.

10. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 1 wherein said soft, elastomeric material comprises silicone.

11. (Allowed) A self-sealing medical balloon of unitary construction, implantable in a human
body, comprising:

a cylindrical valve body having a predetermined diameter and an upper side and

a lower side;

an inlet defined by said valve body lower side;

a cylindrical valve stem extending upwardly from said valve body, said valve

stem having a diameter smaller than said valve body diameter;

a balloon wall adapted to receive and hold fluids, the balloon wall extending upwardly from said valve body, said balloon wall having an inner diameter, while in a deflated state, which is larger than said valve stem diameter such that an annular space exists between said balloon wall and said valve stem while said balloon is deflated, said annular space provided to relieve stress from a union of said balloon wall and said valve body when said balloon is inflated;

a piercing extending from said inlet, through said valve body and through said valve stem, into an inner chamber defined by said balloon, said piercing constructed and arranged to remain closed unless a substantially rigid member is pushed through said piercing, such as to inflate said balloon,

whereby said piercing member recloses after said member is withdrawn, thereby preventing a fluid from escaping from said inner chamber.

12. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 11 whereby said inlet, said valve body, and said valve are substantially concentric, sharing a common longitudinal axis.

13. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 12 whereby said piercing follows said longitudinal axis.

14. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 12 whereby said piercing comprises a curved portion.

15. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 12 whereby said piercing comprises a straight portion and a curved portion, said straight portion extending upwardly from said inlet and substantially parallel to said axis, said curved portion extending from said straight portion to a side of said valve stem.

16. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 11 wherein said annular space is defined on a lower side by a curved web which is concave and opening upwardly.

17. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 11 wherein said balloon is constructed entirely of silicone.

18. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 11 further comprising a removable skirt extending downwardly from said valve body, said skirt providing a surface which may be handled during a balloon manufacturing operation without damaging said balloon wall, or said valve body.

19. (Allowed) The balloon of claim 18 wherein said removable skirt has an outside diameter

smaller than an outside diameter of said valve body such that a ridge is formed between said valve body and said skirt.

20-51. (Withdrawn)

52. (Allowed) A valve of unitary construction, useable to prevent fluid from escaping from an implantable balloon operably attached to the valve, the valve comprising:

a substantially cylindrical body defining an inlet, concentric with said body,

opening in a direction opposite the balloon;

a valve stem, integral with said body, having a substantially cylindrical side and rounded tip opposite said body and leading to an interior of the balloon;

a piercing, defined by said valve body and said valve stem, extending from said inlet toward said balloon and leading to the interior of the balloon, said piercing having a bend which curves toward said stem side;

a cylindrical sidewall, integral with said body, extending in a direction toward said

balloon, radially displaced from said stem side, thereby creating an annular space between said stem and said sidewall, said sidewall having an external surface attachable to said balloon.

53. (Allowed) The valve of claim 52 wherein said body further defines a curved portion, concave so as to open toward said balloon interior, connecting said sidewall with said stem.

54. (Allowed) The valve of claim 52 further comprising an end portion, integral with and extending from said sidewall, which curves inwardly to define an opening having an inner diameter which is smaller than an inner diameter of said cylindrical sidewall.

55. (Allowed) The valve of claim 52 wherein said cylindrical wall comprises a lower sidewall and an upper sidewall and a taper connecting said lower sidewall and said upper sidewall, whereby said lower sidewall has a larger outside diameter than an outside diameter of said upper sidewall.

56. (Allowed) The valve of claim 55 wherein said upper sidewall and said lower sidewall have
substantially equal inner diameters.

57. (Allowed) The valve of claim 52 further comprising a skirt extending from said body in a direction opposite said balloon.

58. (Allowed) The valve of claim 57 wherein said skirt has an outer diameter smaller than an outer diameter of said valve body, thereby providing a visual and tactile definition of an extent of said skirt, such that said skirt may be removed without removing material from said valve body.

59. (Allowed) The valve of claim 57 wherein said skirt is sized to frictionally fit within an open end of a dipping tube.